

Take a virtual tour through time. Part of what makes Yosemite amazing is how it has inspired an ongoing evolution in climbing. Along with these advances come some great stories. If you have an image, object or story that you would like to share with YCA for inclusion into the museum, please contact us.

All material below was written by myself. It is far from perfect and is a work in progress. Any mistakes made were made by me and I don't mind being corrected. I hope you like it.

Ken Yager

Enjoy the tour. Climb on.

September 7, 1869	While sheepherding for the summer in Tuolumne Meadows, John Muir wanders up and climbs Cathedral Peak alone encountering a block about 30 feet high and steep on all sides. Muir climbs up and down a Class 4 crack without a rope. Most climbers to this day are roped up on this section.
October 12, 1875	Trail builder George Anderson climbs Half Dome only five years after the California Geological Survey deemed it unclimbable. Anderson drills holes approximately every six feet with a hand-held drill and a single jack, placing handmade eye bolts into the holes. The bolts serve a dual purpose. They allow him a foothold to stand on while drilling the next hole and enable Anderson to rope himself to the eye of the bolt, giving him some sense of security. George goes on to guide several parties of tourists up the route in years to come. He may be the first climbing guide in Yosemite. Half Dome had had at least two previous attempts on the lower flanks of Half Dome by George Conway and his sons. Conway sent his boys scampering up the lower section and had them hammer spikes into the occasional cracks and anchor a rope for him to pull up with.
August 23, 1877	George Anderson with James Hutchings and J.G. Lembert climb the Southeast Face of Mt. Starr King unaware that it had been climbed the year before by George B. Bayley and E.S. Schuyler. Needless to say, Anderson and his party were dismayed to find the summit cairns left by Bayley and Schuyler. Anderson climbed using moccasins covered in turpentine to give him extra friction on the polished granite dome. He placed one eye bolt and threaded his rope through it for protection.
1880s - 1930	Climbers of these years mostly spend their time un-rope, exploring and climbing unclimbed peaks in the Sierra and scrambling up exposed brushy ledge systems in Yosemite or the classic high points around the Valley floor. Some of the more notable climbers of this period are Charles A. Bailey, S. L. Foster, Joseph N. LeConte, Charles and Enid Michael, Ralph Griswold, James Hutchinson and William Kat. The climbers of

	this era, though bold and committed, are severely handicapped by the lack of rope techniques that had already been developed and improved by the Europeans in the 1850s.
Summer 1930	Francis Farquahr, editor of the Sierra Club Bulletin, while climbing in British Columbia with former college classmates, learns the European rope techniques from Robert Underhill. Underhill has spent the last two summers climbing in the Alps, and he teaches Farquahr the running belay, the use of pitons and rappelling using the Dülfersitz method. Farquahr is so impressed that he asks Underhill to write an article for the Sierra Club Bulletin explaining the new techniques and invites Underhill to the Bay Area to teach the local climbers.
February 1931	Underhill's 20-page article is published in the Bulletin, arousing interest amongst the Sierra Club and other Bay Area mountaineers.
July 12, 1931	Farquahr, with others, goes on the first rock climbing outings organized by the Sierra Club Rock Climbing Section (RCS). Farquahr teaches the others the techniques Underhill has shown him, and the group climbs Unicorn Peak.
August 1931	Underhill finally visits the Bay Area and teams up with Jules Eichorn, Glen Dawson and the legendary Norman Clyde for a five day climbing trip in the Sierras. They climb three new routes, including the impressive East face of Mt. Whitney on August 16, 1931.
Winter 1931-1932	Eichorn teaches the running belay and the Dülfersitz rappel to friends Richard Leonard and Bestor Robinson and other Cragmont Climbing Club members. All winter they practice jumping off the local Berkeley rocks with the belayer letting some rope slide through their hands for a gradual slowing of the falling climber. This reduces stress on the falling climber and the belayer but, even more importantly; it avoids shock loading the weak manila ropes. The Dülfersitz rappel is practiced by wrapping the rope around the body for friction to descend in a somewhat controlled manner.
March 13, 1932	The Cragmont Climbing Club (CCC) disbands and joins the Rock Climbing Section of the Sierra Club. The RCS continues to practice falling, holding falls and rappelling on the local Berkeley rocks for the next year and a half. <a href="http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/rcc-articles-and-letters-early-days">http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/rcc-articles-and-letters-early-days</a>
September 2, 1933	The RCS comes to Yosemite for a climbing outing to try out their well-rehearsed techniques. Richard Leonard, Jules Eichorn, Bestor Robinson and Hervey Voge climb 1,000 feet up Washington Column to what is later called Lunch Ledge. They use 10-inch hardware nails instead of as yet un-acquired pitons from

	Europe. <a href="http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/lunch-ledge-1933">http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/lunch-ledge-1933</a>
September 3, 1933	Eichorn, Leonard and Robinson try to climb the southwest face of Higher Cathedral Spire, getting to within 350 feet of the summit. They are turned back by the steeper rock when the nails they are using start to bend under their bodyweight. They vow to return after acquiring some real pitons.
November 4, 1933	Eichorn, Leonard and Robinson return to Yosemite armed with some pitons that were mail ordered from SportHaus Schüster, a Munich sports shop. They try to climb the Lower Cathedral Spire but are stopped 20 feet above Main Ledge.
November 5, 1933	Unfazed from their attempt on Lower Cathedral Spire the previous day, the three men turn their energies back to Higher Cathedral Spire and “got 180 feet higher on the West face using pitons as direct aid.”
Winter 1933-1934	The trio, obsessed by the Spires, spends the winter planning and studying photographs using a protractor to measure the different angles around the Spires. The men save and work side jobs to buy more pitons from SportHaus Schüster at a dollar apiece. Jules Eichorn is taking piano lessons and turns to his instructor for extra work to pay for the pitons. His instructor’s name is Ansel Adams, and Eichorn develops and washes prints for him in the bathtub at Ansel’s home.
April 15, 1934	Eichorn, Leonard and Robinson return to Higher Cathedral Spire with an entourage of friends and well wishers. They reach the summit in nine hours with a total of 38 pitons. On top, the men string up an American flag and take the obligatory photographs of each other. They then quickly rappel back to the ground and their crowd of spectators as darkness approaches. <a href="http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/higher-cathedral-spire">http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/higher-cathedral-spire</a>
August 8, 1934	Eichorn, Leonard and Robinson climb Lower Cathedral Spire in six and a half hours using only 14 pitons. As with the Higher Spire, this is their third attempt on the route. The men have now climbed the two most technically difficult and intimidating rock climbs in North America and are hailed as heroes by the media. The three men and other RCS members have proven that the European system of climbing works well in Yosemite. They have opened up a whole new realm in Yosemite climbing and provided a glimpse of things to come. While the men are climbing Lower Cathedral Spire, three men, Herbert B. Blanks, Elliot Sawyer, and Boyton S. Kaiser complete the second ascent of Higher Cathedral Spire using the pitons left in place by the first ascent team four months previously. The Higher Spire team take pictures of Leonard, Eichorn and Robinson on the top of Lower Cathedral Spire

	<p>before descending.</p> <p><a href="http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/lower-cathedral-spire">http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/lower-cathedral-spire</a></p>
October 9, 1936	<p>Until now, the Yosemite climbers have shied away from the main cliffs, preferring to climb the lines of least resistance on high points around the Valley or climb the breaks and chimneys between Yosemite's smooth walls and formations. Morgan Harris has become obsessed with a climbing formation above the Ahwahnee Hotel. For conditioning and training Morgan rides his bicycle to Yosemite from the Bay Area to climb the route he calls the Royal Arches. After two previous attempts in the last year, one of which ended in a hospital stay for sunstroke (during his bike ride back home in very hot weather), Harris succeeds with Kenneth Adam and Kenneth Davis. They climb the Royal Arches in eight hours, doing two roped pendulum traverses. The top and bottom half of the Arches is separated by a blank looking right facing corner. The men are able to overcome this section by shinnying up a dead tree that has fallen and become lodged across the corner, dubbing it the "Rotten Log." The Rotten Log was climbed by thousands of climbers until it was pushed off in 1986. The Royal Arches is the first Yosemite climb that goes up the middle of a major wall with no actual summit and soon becomes a Valley classic.</p>
October 12, 1936	Morgan Harris teams up with David Brower and they climb the imposing Panorama Cliff in a single day. This climb tops off an incredible four day climbing spree for Harris which started with the Royal Arches on October 9th. During this spree he also attempted the North Face of Sentinel Rock, climbed the Cathedral Chimney with Brower, and finished with the Panorama Cliff climb.
September 1937	A one hundred foot spire to the right of the Yosemite Falls Wall is climbed by Richard Leonard and David Brower and they name it Arrowhead Spire. They free climb the route at what is currently a 5.5 grade.
1934-1940	During this era there are several other accomplished climbers, many of whom had first ascents of their own, though not of the magnitude of those previously listed. For the most part they were RCS members and participated in their regular outings in the Valley and the High Sierra. Most of them were content to repeat the routes that were already established. These climbers include Raffi Bedayn, Torcum Bedayn, Randolph May, Robin Hansen, Fritz Lippman, Carl

	Jensen, Oliver Kerlein, Jack Riegelhuth and female climbers Olive Dyer, Doris F. Corcoran (Leonard), Ethel Mae Hill, Virginia Greever, and Marjory Bridge (Farquahr). By far, the most prolific climbers of the 1930's were Morgan Harris and David Brower. Together, they established ten new routes. Harris had fourteen first ascents during this era and Brower was the leader with sixteen, a record that would hold up for seventeen years.
May 1940	Dave Brower and Morgan Harris climb the West Face of Sentinel Rock via a route they call the Circular Staircase.
December 7, 1941	Torcum Bedayn and Fritz Lippmann climb the loose and intimidating West Arrowhead Chimney which had seen two previous attempts by Lippmann. This climb is significant for a couple of reasons. One reason is that the men felt that they could not retreat from the climb and that it was a "Suicide Route". The climbers had not adhered to the safety first principles that the RCS promoted. The older RCS members considered the route to be irresponsible. The other reason for the climbs significance is that, unknown to the climbers, the Japanese had just bombed Pearl Harbor marking the United States involvement in World War II. Climbing virtually stopped overnight as the Yosemite Climbers heeded the call to serve their country.
December 7, 1941 - September 2, 1945	About 1,000 of the Sierra Club members serve in the war, many of the rock climbing members joining the 10 <sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. The RCS skills prove to be invaluable and several of the RCS members became instructors. The war puts a damper on new route activity until 1946, and it will take a new generation of rock climbers to push the limits of Yosemite rock climbing. The war effort produced three innovations that were tested thoroughly and shaped climbing's future. They were thin wafer pitons, aluminum carabiners and nylon ropes. When the war ends, these items are all readily available to climbers in surplus stores except for the aluminum carabiner, this need is filled by Raffi Bedayan when he manufactures them. Yosemite climbers now have three different sizes of pitons (thin wafer pitons and two sizes of angles) that are readily available in army surplus stores at a reasonable cost. Aluminum carabiners are about half the weight of the standard steel carabiner, making it more feasible to carry a lot of gear. The best innovation from the war is the nylon rope which is vastly superior to the hemp ropes. A climber could now take a longer lead fall without the fear of the rope breaking as long as the rope isn't running over a sharp edge.

1945	<p>Swiss born John Salathé, a blacksmith in San Mateo, is feeling ill and is idly watching a cow and calf grazing outside his workshop when a voice says, "John, look at those healthy animals. They eat grass, not meat. You eat meat, and you are always feeling sick". Salathé is to have many more conversations with what he refers to as his "Angels". John immediately becomes a lifelong vegetarian and, upon his doctor's suggestion, goes to Tuolumne Meadows for some fresh air. While there, he inadvertently ends up at the Sierra Club's lodge at Soda Springs. Salathé is intrigued when he hears the caretakers talk about the RCS's climbing outings.</p> <p>At the age of 46, Salathé does his first and what could have been his last climb. Robin Hansen, after leading a climb on Hunters Hill near Vallejo, tells Salathé to come on up and "climb freely," meaning to climb only the rock and not to pull on the rope or the pitons. After several minutes, Hansen hasn't felt any activity on the rope when suddenly Salathé pops around the corner climbing un-rope. Salathé had misunderstood Hansen, thinking that "climb freely" meant free of the rope.</p> <p>Salathé's physical health returns and he quickly becomes obsessed with climbing. Being older, Salathé isn't as agile as the younger climbers so he isn't a particularly good free climber. Because of this, he focuses his attentions on aid (artificial) climbing. Climbers so far have done mostly free routes with short sections of aid in order to link together the free climbing sections. Salathé becomes the first climber to embrace aid climbing as a predominant means of ascending. Salathé realizes that the soft iron pitons will not be durable enough for multiple placements in Yosemite granite but, being a blacksmith, he decides to do something about it. Back at his shop, he fashions the first hard steel pitons out of Ford Model A axles, and they work splendidly.</p> <p><a href="http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/john-salathe-and-yvon-chouinard-camp-4">http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/john-salathe-and-yvon-chouinard-camp-4</a></p>
1946	<p>Salathé decides to try his new pitons on the Lost Arrow Spire. His two partners don't show up, so he decides to rappel to the notch and have a look around. Leaving his ropes in place and peeking around the corner from a small, exposed ledge, he finds a thin crack system. Undaunted by the exposed 2,000 foot drop, he sets up a self-belay system and starts aid climbing. He makes good progress up to a ledge that now bears his name. He retreats due to impending nightfall vowing to return armed with more equipment and a partner.</p>

	Salathe returns for another attempt with John Thune Sr. While re-climbing the section that he had soloed, one of Salathé's pitons pulls out just off the tiny ledge and he plummets past a cowering Thune who manages to stop the fall. Undaunted, Salathé climbs back up and continues past his previous high point. When the incipient cracks end, he uses his hammer and drill to place bolts. Though bolts have been used a few times before to protect blank face-climbing sections, this is the first time they have been used for upward progress. They run out of daylight at a blank section 30 feet shy of the summit.
September 2, 1946	Anton Nelson, Jack Arnold, Robin Hansen, and Fritz Lippman spend several days trying to throw fishing weights attached to a light line over the Arrow Tip from the Valley rim. Hansen is finally successful and the weighted line can be seen dangling at Salathe Ledge. Nelson and Arnold spend two days and a night in the Notch climbing Salathé's route to Salathe Ledge and reach the weighted line. A climbing rope is then pulled over the Tip and anchored on the rim. The fearless Arnold climbs up to the summit using prusiks on the fixed rope and starts drilling holes for a bolted anchor. A Tyrolean Traverse is set up and Lippman slides out to the summit with an improvised chest harness and a single carabiner. Midway through the traverse is a knot in the rope and Lippman is forced to un-clip the carabiner to get past the knot. Nelson prusiks to the summit and all three men traverse back to the rim as darkness approaches. Robin Hansen does not have the time to do the Tyrolean due to the darkness. They get the coveted first ascent of Lost Arrow after using what Salathe calls a "rope trick". The climb is covered in an article in the Washington Post written by Lippmann.
October 13 - 14, 1946	Just over a year after his first climb, Salathé with Anton "Axe" Nelson climbs the Southwest Face of Half Dome in a 20 hour marathon using 150 piton placements and not a single bolt is placed. Subsequent parties place bolts on the route most of which have since been removed. Nelson and Salathé spend the night standing on a small ledge till daybreak before making the summit. This represents the first time that anyone has bivouacked on a climb in Yosemite.
September 3, 1947	John Salathé and Ax Nelson climb the Lost Arrow Chimney to the Lost Arrow Tip after five days and much preparation. The men brought only six quarts of water and had to ration carefully. On the final day friends lowered water to them. They brought 18 pitons and 12 carabiners which forced the men to lower down on each pitch and clean gear to be used higher on the pitch. They had made two previous attempts earlier in the year, on one attempt they were forced to retreat due to rain and the other due to heat and lack of equipment. This is the first time a climbing party has intentionally

	planned on staying several nights on a climb. This is a whole new level of commitment so far unseen in the United States. <a href="http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/category/image-galleries/john-salathe">http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/category/image-galleries/john-salathe</a>
July 4, 1950	John Salathé and Allen Steck climb the North Face of Sentinel Rock during five days of blistering hot weather. The pair has provisioned a quart of water each per day which soon proved inadequate due to the heat and the tremendous amount of effort required. At the crux, the Narrows, Salathe stacks pitons back to back to overcome this section. This proves to be Salathe's last big climb. His three visionary routes – Southwest Face of Half Dome, Lost Arrow Chimney and the North Face of Sentinel Rock – have stood the test of time and are still bold outings to this day. Salathe's pitons work so well that others (Yvon Chouinard, Dick Long, Jerry Gallwas and Chuck Wilts) use almost identical designs when making their own. Salathe has proven that, with careful planning, equipment and plenty of determination, Yosemite's formidable walls can be climbed. His climbs were such a huge jump in commitment that Salathe is considered the grandfather of big wall climbing.
1952	Allen Steck and Bob Swift climb the buttress on the far right side of Yosemite Falls wall establishing Yosemite Point Buttress. <a href="http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/al-steck-yosemite-point-buttress">http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/al-steck-yosemite-point-buttress</a>
May 30 - June 1, 1953	Al Steck returns to the Valley with Will Siri, Willi Unsoeld and Bill Long and, after three days, they succeed in climbing the East Buttress, establishing the first route on the flanks of El Capitan. During an earlier attempt with Bill Dunmire, and brothers Bill and Dick Long, Dunmire popped a piton and several others below it making it Yosemite's first "Zipper" fall. Dunmire was knocked unconscious and bleeding, much to his partners horror.
1953	Royal Robbins, a talented 18 year old Southern California climber, along with Don Wilson and Jerry Gallwas climb the second ascent of Salathe's intimidating route, the Steck Salathe on the North Face of Sentinel Rock in an unbelievable two days. Robbins has already made a name for himself a year previously by getting off route on the Higher Cathedral Spire and establishing a desperate 5.9 variation.
May, 1954	Newcomer Warren Harding arrives and joins Frank Tarver on the North Buttress of Middle Cathedral Rock. Arriving at the base, they are surprised to see Craig Holden and John Whitmer a few hundred feet up. Harding and Tarver start climbing and soon catch up to Holden and Whitmer. The four join forces and spend three hot days on the longest climb yet done in the Valley.

July, 1954	Harding and Tarver, with Bob Swift, do the second ascent of Salathé's feared Lost Arrow Chimney route in a four-day effort. Warren leads many of the free climbing pitches involving strenuous chimney climbing and horrific runouts partly due to the fact that Salathé and Nelson had destroyed some of the bolts they had placed in order to reuse the hangers.
Labor Day 1954	Encouraged by his recent successes, Warren Harding sets his sights on the East Buttress of Middle Cathedral Rock, only half the length of the North Buttress of Middle Cathedral Rock but more continuously difficult. Harding, Whitmer and Swift battle it out with an ant nest then are stopped by a blank section that requires bolting. They spend the night and get several pitches higher but, demoralized, decide to retreat.
Memorial Day, 1955	Warren Harding, Bob Swift, and Jack Davis complete the East Buttress of Middle Cathedral Rock in a two day effort. This route, as many of Harding's routes, becomes a classic and very popular.
June, 1956	Mark Powell, Jerry Gallwas, Don Wilson climb the East Buttress of Lower Cathedral Rock. They did this intimidating wall in fourteen hour effort, a remarkable feat. This becomes the first long new route done in a single day. This opened eyes amongst the climbers and gave a glimpse of the future.
September, 1956	On a roll, Mark Powell climbs the South Face of Liberty Cap with Royal Robbins and Joe Fitzsimmons, another long route.
October, 1956	Mark Powell teams up with Bill "Dolt" Feuerer, and they climb Arrowhead Arête, considered the most intimidating and continuously difficult free climb in the country at the time. Powell's first climb ever with Jerry Gallwas on Lower Cathedral Spire was not promising to say the least. Powell, an overweight chain smoker, is hauled up by Gallwas who later was heard to say that "Powell didn't have it in him to amount to anything in the climbing world." Powell sheds 40 pounds and becomes one of the best and fastest free climbers of his time. Powell is credited with being the first full-time climber that supported his endeavor with occasional odd jobs. He later shattered his ankle in September 1957 while climbing on a relatively easy climb with a young lady friend which essentially ended his climbing career for awhile. He went on to put up cutting edge and well respected routes in Taquitz and on the desert towers in the Southwest after re-learning to climb with his fused ankle.
1956	So far, the faces of El Capitan and Half Dome are unclimbed. The Northwest Face of Half Dome sees early reconnaissance by several parties including one attempt that involves Warren Harding, Royal Robbins, Jerry Gallwas and Don Wilson. This attempt goes slowly and the party retreats even though

	Robbins and Harding are willing to push on.
July, 1957	Harding races his Corvette up the Valley intending to meet with Bill "Dolt" Feuerer and Mark Powell to climb the Northwest Face of Half Dome but, when he arrives, the men find Robbins, Jerry Gallwas and Mike Sherrick one day short of the top. The three men complete the Northwest Face in a brilliant five day effort. The disappointed but gracious Harding meets the men on the summit with beer and sandwiches and offers his congratulations. The Northwest Face of Half Dome is the longest and most demanding route to date and is considered Yosemite's first Grade VI.
July, 1957	Warren Harding has come to the Valley to climb. He decides to take the next obvious step and see what El Capitan has to offer. Harding, Dolt, and Powell hang out in El Capitan meadow with copious quantities of red jug wine and study the face. They choose a route right up the center and longest part of El Capitan. They choose this route because it offers a variety of ledges that will enable them to stockpile provisions for this overwhelming venture. Harding realizes that for him to succeed, he will have to use siege tactics much like what was being employed on Himalayan climbs and establish camps on these ledges. He and his team would be able to work on the climb above these camps continuing to push the route higher and string fixed rope to the ground to enable re-provisioning of the camps and relatively easy access to the previous high point by using prusiks.
July, 1957	<p>Harding joins Powell and Feuerer spend six days on the rock retreating after 1,000 feet of climbing. Mark Powell leads what is to be called the Stoveleg cracks with a mixture of free and aid climbing utilizing Frank Tarver's infamous Stoveleg pitons. The pitons were made from the legs cut off of a wood burning stove. Tarver made four of them and they eventually become the most famous pitons in the world. Harding and his crew try using a capstan to pull up a wheeled cart loaded with provisions and christen it the "Dolt Cart". The Dolt Cart proves to be more of a hindrance than helpful and the idea was discarded.</p> <p>Trying to cut costs, the men string hemp rope to their high point rather than using more expensive nylon rope. On Harding's third attempt with Feuerer, Al Steck, they recruit another brilliant climber, Wally Reed. Wally Reed is prusiking up the fixed hemp line behind Harding when it suddenly snaps and Reed slides back down to "Dolt Hole." After this unnerving incident, Harding was heard to say "cost be damned from now we are using nylon rope."</p> <p>Harding spends a total of 47 days with a variety of partners over the next 1 ½ years before he completes the climb. Because of traffic jams that effectively close the roads caused</p>

	by tourists gawking at the climbers, the National Park Service restricts Harding and his crew from climbing on El Capitan during the summer months of the tourist season.
November 1-12, 1958	<p>The Park Service gives an ultimatum to Harding: "Either finish the climb or pull your ropes by Thanksgiving." Warren later said "I am not really sure how they were going to enforce it". Rich Calderwood, Wayne Merry and George Whitmore join Harding for the final push. Nine days into the climb Calderwood, thinking about his pregnant wife, decides he's had enough and rappels the fixed lines without telling anyone. The three men continue climbing and encounter a blank-looking overhang 100 feet below the summit. They are exhausted and, understandably, depressed. Harding takes over the lead and starts drilling and placing bolts up the overhanging rock. As it gets dark, Harding refuses to stop and continues throughout the night oblivious to the fact that his belayer is drifting in and out of sleep while hanging in slings. Harding, Whitmore and Merry reach the summit at 6:00 a.m. after spending a record 12 days on the climb they call "The Nose."</p> <p>The Nose was the first climb to use siege tactics in Yosemite. Harding employed fixed rope up the climb not only for shuttling of provisions to the various camps that were set up on the routes six spacious ledges but for an escape route should it be needed. The climbers were innovative, designing and making a lot of homemade gear. Dolt made aluminum angles that could be wing nutted together back to back for use in the wider cracks. They used I-Beam steel and aluminum to fashion crude large pitons. The largest steel I-Beam piton was knick-named the "Big Brute". The heavy piton pulled out and hit Harding in the head on the pitch leading to the small ledge called the Glowering Spot. It apparently described Harding's mood when his partners reached him. Some things worked well and some things didn't. They tried using lacquer cans for water but found it unpalatable. There was the infamous Dolt Cart which had a short but colorful history.</p> <p>Frank Tarver's Stoveleg pitons had worked so well on the lower part of the route that Rich Calderwood went to a junkyard to find a stove to make some of his own. The proprietor, after learning what Rich was going to do to the stove, refused to sell a good one and would only sell him one with three legs. The seven "stove leg" pitons were hanging at a high point on the East Face of Washington Column, another project started by Harding during the El Capitan climbing ban in the summer of 1958. The pitons were needed for the final push on the Nose and Calderwood was sent up to retrieve them. At the high point of the East Face, the pitons are missing. After rappelling back to the bottom, Rich finds the scattered pitons and a rat-chewed sling after scouring the</p>

	<p>base. They place 125 bolts on the route. During the climb, Wayne Merry writes love letters to his sweetheart and future wife then tosses them off of the cliff in soup cans for her to find. The climb was covered heavily by the media. On the summit a reporter asked Harding what it felt like to have conquered El Capitan. Harding responded in his characteristic drawl "Well, it seems to me that El Capitan is in a lot better shape than I am right now".</p> <p>The Nose of El Capitan and the Northeast Face of Half Dome are both visionary routes, though done in two completely different styles. The two men responsible for these routes, Robbins and Harding, become the unelected leaders of these contrasting styles, opening up countless discussions on climbing ethics and putting a burden on their friendship. These routes opened eyes and set a new climbing standard, giving us a glimpse of what was yet to come.</p>
April, 1960	Chouinard along with Tom Frost invents the Realized Ultimate Reality Piton or Rurp. This is the smallest piton yet made. They use these pitons to climb the short aid climbing test piece they name the Southwest Corner of Kat Pinnacle. For a brief period this is Yosemite's hardest aid climb. Rurps eventually become a necessary tool of the serious aid climber's arsenal.
September, 1960	Royal Robbins, Chuck Pratt, Joe Fitzsimmons, and Tom Frost climb the second ascent of the Nose, without the use of fixed ropes, in an incredible six and a half days.
September, 1961	Royal Robbins, Chuck Pratt, and Tom Frost climb for three days and get up 900 feet on a new El Capitan route, the Salathé Wall. They rappel to the ground leaving their gear on Heart Ledge and fixed ropes to their high point.
September, 1961	<p>Supplied with food and water, Robbins, Pratt, and Frost prusik back up to their high point at Heart Ledges 900 feet up. They drop their fixed ropes and cast off for the summit. They climb the rest of the route in a single push over the next six days, placing only 13 bolts on the whole route. This wandering route pieces together several different crack systems and the climbers are able to free climb about a quarter of the route.</p> <p>The three men prove that El Cap could be climbed without the extreme siege tactics that Harding had employed and that, with careful planning and route selection, Yosemite's big walls can be done with a minimal amount of bolting and a larger commitment.</p>
October, 1961	Chuck Pratt and Mort Hempel climb the Crack of Doom on Elephant Rock. This climb ushers in the 5.10 rating in Yosemite Valley. This climb becomes a Valley test piece for wide crack climbers and is still considered a bold outing to

	this day.
October, 1961	<p>Harding climbs the blank and severely overhanging West Face of Leaning Tower with Glen Denny and Al McDonald. They place 110 bolts on this 1,500 foot climb. On an earlier attempt, Harding pulls a block onto his head, resulting in a fall. His partner worries when he sees blood dripping and doesn't get an answer from Harding. Harding comes to and lowers back to the belay. It's almost dark and Harding has a nasty cut on his forehead, but he insists on opening a bottle of wine before rappelling and heading to the clinic for stitches.</p> <p>This climb is considered to be overbolted by many of the Valley regulars and ethical discussions ensue. The Leaning Tower is now very popular and is considered a classic.</p>
June, 1962	<p>Yvon Chouinard climbs the Direct North Buttress of Middle Cathedral Rock with Steve Roper. They are awakened in the night by a heavy downpour soaking their down jackets. After reaching the Valley floor, on a whim, they weigh their soggy jackets in at a whopping 7 ½ lbs. each.</p>
August, 1962	<p>Yvon Chouinard and T.M.Herbert establish the Chouinard-Herbert route on Sentinel Rock, the second route up the north face. This route becomes very popular due to it not being particularly difficult.</p>
September, 1962	<p>Chouinard is on a roll. He and Tom Frost climb the remote Quarter Dome in Tenaya Canyon.</p>
November, 1962	<p>El Cooper, Jim Baldwin and Glen Denny climb the Dihedral Wall of El Capitan the sheerest route to date. They take 38 days spread out over an eight month period. 110 bolts are placed and they fix rope to 1,900 feet. This climb perturbs many of the Valley locals because Cooper and Baldwin are from Canada, haven't done any of the established Yosemite routes, and it is felt the route could have been done in a better style with less bolting.</p>
April-May, 1963	<p>Colorado climber Layton Kor, intense and energetic, arrives on the Valley scene and starts a new route on El Capitan's West Buttress along with Eric Beck, fixing rope to 1,200 feet. Beck decides he is not interested in the climb and is replaced by Steve Roper. Kor and Roper finish the climb in three days, placing 21 bolts. Layton Kor is the first outsider that adjusts to Yosemite's blank and forbidding climbing relatively easily. When he first arrives he asks the locals where the harder climbs are and much to the Valley locals surprise he is able to do them thus gaining their respect.</p>
1963	Layton Kor, Steve Roper, and Glen Denny do the third ascent

	of the Nose in a remarkably quick three and a half days.
1963	The Steck-Salathe route on Sentinel becomes a test piece to gauge a climber's efficiency and speed with a friendly rivalry between the Valley elite. Kor and Roper shave two hours off of Robbins record time of ten hours. Not to be outdone, Robbins teams up with Tom Frost and they climb it in an unbelievable time of three hours and fourteen minutes!
May, 1963	Royal Robbins becomes the first person to solo a Yosemite big wall when he does the second ascent of Harding's West Face of Leaning Tower spending four days on the wall in stormy weather.
June, 1963	Ed Cooper and Galen Rowell start a new route on the Northwest Face of Half Dome. Royal is concerned that it will be another long drawn out siege climb similar to the Dihedral Wall. Robbins teams up with Dick McCracken and they jump on the route during poor weather. After four days of climbing they complete the Direct Northwest Face. Though the climb was done in good style there is divided opinion as to whether it was appropriate for them to jump on a route started by others. Cooper is so disappointed that he essentially quits climbing and doesn't bother to retrieve his rack from the base of Half Dome.
June, 1963	A week after completing their route on Half Dome, McCracken and Robbins climb a route on the right side of Yosemite Falls naming it the Misty Wall.
1964	Frank Sacherer hits the Valley scene with a free-climbing frenzy and firmly establishes the 5.10 grade that Pratt had introduced. He teams up with Chuck Pratt, and they free climb Salathé's Lost Arrow Chimney in a single day. Sacherer then free climbs the Northeast Buttress of Higher Cathedral Rock with Jeff Dozier. As if that wasn't enough, he frees Salathé's Southwest Face of Half Dome. (These routes are all long outings. Sacherer proves that Yosemite's longer routes can be free climbed.)
June, 1964	Layton Kor and Chris Fredericks climb the South Face of Washington's Column, linking together improbable looking crack systems with very few bolts placed for aid. The South Face is currently the most popular overnight climb in the Valley.
July, 1964	Warren Harding, Chuck Pratt and Yvon Chouinard climb the South Face of Mount Watkins remotely located in Tenaya Canyon. They climb five days in full sun during a summer heat spell. On the fifth day, Harding refuses to drink any water, believing it to be more beneficial for Pratt and Chouinard to consume what little is left because they are

	leading the final pitches to the summit.
October, 1964	Royal Robbins, Tom Frost, Yvon Chouinard and Chuck Pratt climb a route up the continuously overhanging Southeast Face of El Capitan during sometimes poor weather. The North American Wall is climbed in nine days, involving rotten rock and extreme aid climbing, making it the hardest big wall to date.
May, 1965	Layton Kor and Tom Fender climb a route to the left of Ribbon Falls naming it the Gold Wall.
1965	Frank Sacherer free climbs the Direct North Buttress of Middle Cathedral Rock with Eric Beck establishing Yosemite's longest free route to date.
1965	Sacherer hooks up with Ed Leeper and they free climb the East Buttress of Middle Cathedral Rock. This route becomes one of the most popular long free climbs in the Valley.
September, 1965	Chuck Pratt and Chris Fredericks free climb the bold, overhanging, and sparsely protected, six inch wide crack at the Cookie Cliff, calling it the Twilight Zone. This climb, though fairly short, becomes a Yosemite test-piece for the aspiring Valley hardman.
1966	Jeff Foote and Steve Roper do the first one-day ascent of the Northwest Face of Half Dome. Eric Beck does the first solo of the same route shortly afterwards.  (Nuts, an alternative to the rock scarring pitons, are trickling over from Great Britain. Royal Robbins is credited to be the first to bring them to the Valley after his 1966 climbing trip to the U.K. Some climbers start testing them apprehensively to determine if they will have a role in Yosemite's future.)
October, 1966	Royal Robbins, Liz Robbins, Mike Dent, and Victor Cowley teamed up for relatively obscure longer route called Boulderfield Gorge. What makes it significant is that the route was put up without using pitons, making it the first in the Valley.
May, 1967	Royal Robbins and his wife, Liz, establish the Nutcracker on Manure Pile Buttress. They use only nuts and don't bring any pitons on this 800 ft. free climb. Robbins proved that hammerless gear was a viable source of protection. This climb is credited with Yosemite's transformation to the clean climbing movement. Unfortunately, pitons have been used on the climb since then and somebody added a two bolt anchor at the top of the second to last pitch. The bolts have since been removed.
June, 1967	T.M. Herbert and Royal Robbins climb the 2,000 West Face of

	El Capitan in 4 ½ days during extremely wet weather placing only one bolt.
June, 1967	Liz Robbins, with her husband Royal, climb the Northwest Face of Half Dome, making her the first female climber to do a Yosemite Grade VI.
June, 1967	Jim Bridwell and Jim Stanton free climb the Stoveleg cracks on the Nose of El Capitan.
June, 1967	Jim Bridwell and Chris Fredericks establish the East Face of Higher Cathedral Rock.
1968	Royal Robbins does the first solo ascent of El Capitan by getting the second ascent of the Muir Wall in a grueling nine day effort. Royal takes a fall onto a Rurp on one of the crux pitches. Fortunately, his self belay system using jumars catches his fall.
Fall, 1968	Warren Harding and Galen Rowell start a route on the blank looking South Face of Half Dome. The pair gets trapped during an autumn snow storm about a thousand feet below the summit. Royal Robbins is lowered down from the top and rescues the thankful men.
May, 1969	Royal Robbins and Glen Denny climb the Prow on Washington Column. This popular route becomes a Grade V test-piece for the aspiring El Capitan climber.
May, 1969	Warren Harding and Galen Rowell establish a new route on the Southwest Face of Liberty Cap.
October 1969	Robbins and Don Peterson climb Tis-sa-ack on the Northwest face of Half Dome. The men do not enjoy each others company and they spend eight days placing 110 bolts. This is, by far, the most bolts that Robbins has ever placed on a single route. This embarrasses him because he has always spoken out against Warren Harding's extravagant bolting practices.
The 1970's	The 1970's see many changes, with Yosemite climbing going mainly in two distinct directions partly due to the fact that most of the formations have been climbed and the remaining new terrain is between existing routes. Another factor is that climbing has become much more popular and not pursued by just a handful of people as in the past. Yosemite climbers are looking for new challenges and start to explore the more intimidating lines. Free climbing grades are being pushed, mostly on various shorter cliffs around the Valley, though some climbers are freeing aid sections on longer routes. Climbing 5.10 and 5.11 is no longer unusual and becomes the norm. Big walls are being repeated frequently and done more quickly than in the past. New big walls are being put up at an

	increasing pace with the technical and free climbing difficulties being pushed to new levels. Jim Bridwell becomes one of the few that excels in both the free climbing and big wall climbing movements. Bouldering starts to emerge as a climbing activity of its own. Clean climbing takes hold and pitons are rarely used by the end of the decade other than for aid climbing on the big walls. Another big innovation is the introduction of sticky soled shoes in the late '70's.
April, 1970	Chuck Kroger and Scott Davis establish the Heart route on El Capitan in an eight day push after fixing the first three pitches and placing a modest 27 bolts. Even though the men are outsiders, there is no resentment among the Valley locals because they did the route in what was considered very good style.
May, 1970	Royal Robbins solos the first ascent of In Cold Blood on Sentinel's West Face in two days. He places eight bolts. This is the first time a new route of this length has been soloed in Yosemite.
July, 1970	Dick Dorworth joins Royal Robbins and they climb another new Grade VI route on the North Face of Half Dome making it Royals fourth new route on Half Dome's Northwest Face. They christen it Arcturus.
July, 1970	Warren Harding and Galen Rowell complete their South Face Route on Half Dome in six days. They had made six previous attempts, one of which ended in the dramatic rescue by Royal Robbins after the pair nearly drowned from the runoff during a downpour (two other rescues have been performed since then on the South Face of Half Dome due to similar circumstances). Harding and Rowell drill 180 holes and place 39 bolts on the blank upper section of the South Face rekindling once again the bolting controversy. Harding introduces Bat hooking by using a modified hook in the shallow drilled holes as a means of saving time. The men also try out Harding's new creation the Bat Tent, an enclosed single suspension hammock that has a rain fly built into it.
November, 1970	Harding and Dean Caldwell climb the Wall of the Early Morning Light in a single push spending 26½ consecutive days on the rock and drilling close to 300 bolts. They persevere through cold stormy weather and dwindling food supplies. Near the top, the climbers are offered a rescue but they stoutly refuse. The climb becomes a media sensation and once again, Harding is in the spotlight. This, by far, is the longest anyone has spent on a route. The climb escalates the bolting debates to its peak, making it a sensitive and emotional topic among Yosemite climbers.
1971	Clean climbing is introduced in a free publication written by Doug Robinson, John Stannard, Yvon Chouinard, and Tom

	Frost. This pamphlet has a huge impact and in large part was responsible for the clean climbing movement.
1971	Peter Haan solos the Salathe Wall on El Capitan becoming the second person to solo an El Capitan route. It is a bold undertaking due to the mandatory free climbing required for the route. Even more impressive, this was his first big wall experience and he had not spent a night on a climb before. To read his recollection: <a href="http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/salathe-wall-solo">http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/salathe-wall-solo</a>
June, 1971	Jim Bridwell and Kim Schmitz do the first ascent of the Aquarian Wall on El Capitan's Southwest Face. Bridwell will go on to be one of the dominant figures in new route activity on El Capitan.
1971	Rick Sylvester and Claude Wreford-Brown establish the Son of Heart (aka Heart Woute) on El Capitan's Southwest Face. The route has an intimidating mandatory free climbing off-width section.
1972	Jim Dunn becomes the first person to solo a new El Capitan route calling it Cosmos.
1972	Charlie Porter establishes the Shield on El Capitan with Gary Bocarde. This visionary route is the predecessor to the hard aid lines of the future.
1972	Barry Bates and Steve Wunsch free climb Jim Bridwells route, New Dimensions at Arch Rock, introducing the 5.11 grade to the Valley.
May, 1972	Young Canadians, Hugh Burton and Steve Sutton, do the first ascent of the Magic Mushroom on El Capitan's Southwest Face.
November, 1972	Charlie Porter solos a first ascent on the overhanging Southeast Face of El Capitan. He names the route the Zodiac. The climb is considered the hardest technical route in the country and possibly the world for the time. This route shows Porter's dominance as Yosemite's boldest aid and big wall climber of his time.
1973	Hot free climber, Henry Barber, climbs the Steck-Salathe route on Sentinel Rock without a rope, opening the eyes of the Valley locals. Next, he teams up with George Meyers to establish Butterballs, a hard core Cookie Cliff test-piece.
1973	Sibylle Hechtel and Bev Johnson become the first to do an all female ascent of El Capitan by climbing the Triple Direct.
1973	Charlie Porter and John-Paul de St. Crois climb a new route

	through the most overhanging section of El Capitan's Southeast Face. They call this intimidating route Tangerine Trip.
October, 1973	Charlie Porter teams up with Hugh Burton, Steve Sutton, and Chris Nelson and they do the first ascent of the long route Mescalito on El Capitan.
May, 1974	Charlie Porter establishes yet another new route on El Capitan. He teams up with Bev Johnson and they name the route Grape Race.
October, 1974	Hugh Burton and Steve Sutton do the first ascent of the Horse Chute on El Capitan's Southwest Face.
May, 1975	Rick Accomazzo, Gib Lewis, and Richard Harrison establish Electric Ladyland on the steep Southeast Face of Washinton Column.
May, 1975	Jim Bridwell, John Long, Kevin Worrall, Mike Graham, John Bachar, and Ron Kauk free climb the lower third of the Salathe Wall on El Capitan naming the free version Free Blast.
May, 1975	John Long, John Bachar, and Ron Kauk free climb Hardings overhanging East Face route on Washington Column naming the free route Astroman.
May, 1975	Jim Bridwell, Bill Westbay, Jay Fiske, and Fred East establish an El Capitan aid climbing test-piece called the Pacific Ocean Wall. This route is considered the hardest on El Capitan at the time. Rik Reider on an earlier attempt, with Mike Graham, Billy Westbay, and Bridwell, was hit on the head by a large rock while on the fifth pitch. Reider ends up with a severe skull fracture and has to have emergency brain surgery in Fresno.
1975	Jim Bridwell, John Long, and Billy Westbay climb the Nose in less than 24 hours establishing the first one day ascent of El Capitan. This really opened the eyes of the Valley locals because many felt it could never be done.
1975	Henry Barber free climbs the 120 foot Fish Crack at Cascade Falls bringing the 5.12 free climbing grade to Yosemite.
1976	Jim Erickson and Art Higbee free climb the Northwest Face of Half Dome at a 5.12 grade.
May, 1976	Jim Bridwell does another new route on El Capitan's Southwest Face with Kim Schmitz and Jim Pettigrew. They name the route Mirage.
May, 1976	On a roll, Jim Pettigrew teams up with Dave Bircheff and grabs another new route on El Capitan. They name it Lurking Fear

	and surprisingly it ends up being relatively moderate and becomes very popular for that reason.
1977	An airplane crash was discovered in Lower Merced Pass Lake. The plane had been carrying several tons of baled Mexican marijauna. NPS had initially cleaned up what was on the shore and because of the unusually cold weather decided to leave the rest to be removed in the spring. Word got out in the Yosemite community and it grew to be too big a temptation for most of the Yosemite climbers and the Curry Company employees. People hiked 20 miles, forged through icy stream crossings, with empty packs to see if the rumor was true. It was! It became a miniature gold rush. Almost overnight climbers were seen, driving new cars, climbing with shiny racks, and racking up giant bills in the local restaurants. The local businesses profited immensely and service employees benefited from exorbitant tips. Most of the climbers squandered their money rather quickly though some invested it wisely. Despite the distractions, climbing eventually resumed to normal.
April, 1977	Molly Higgins and Barb Eastman climb the Nose becoming the second female party to climb El Capitan and the first to do the Nose.
1977	Ray Jardine establishes the 5.13 grade in Yosemite by doing Phoenix at Cascade Cliff. Using his secret cams for protection, Jardine and his regular partner sworn to secrecy, John Lakey, do many hard free first ascents during this time. Jardine has invented the Friend, the first functional camming devices, and they test them thoroughly on other extreme routes like Hangdog Flyer, Crimson Cringe, and the Owl Roof. The Friends allow protection in parallel cracks where previously only pitons would work. Jardine patents the Friend and puts them on the market. Later Jardine sells the patent to Wild Country and buys a sailboat and disappears. Jardine's hang dogging technique of hanging on the rope and then practicing the hard moves after falling until he could piece together the parts in a single free push were controversial with most of the Valley locals. The local climbers have always lowered down after falling and pulling their ropes before trying the climb again. This technique is currently widely accepted on harder climbs. Jardine tries to free climb the Nose in 1980 but receives a lot of negativity after he chips artificial holds on a blank traversing section. Jardine's Yosemite climbing career virtually ends after this event.
1978	Ron Kauk climbs the Midnight Lightning, an extremely hard boulder problem on Columbia Rock in Camp IV. The boulder problem was first discovered by John Yablonski. The problem was worked on by Yablonski, Kauk, and John Bachar before Ron climbed this coveted prize. (Midnight Lightning is known around the world and is looked at or tried by almost all

	visiting climbers.)
1978	Bev Johnson becomes the first female to solo El Capitan by climbing the Dihedral Wall.
October, 1978	Jim Bridwell, Dave Diegelman, and Dale Bard climb the Sea of Dreams establishing a route more difficult than the Pacific Ocean Wall. The route boasts Rurp anchors and a "fall and you die pitch" aptly named the Hook or Book pitch. Of all the El Capitan routes that Bridwell put up this one is probably his crowning achievement.
May, 1979	Ray Jardine, with Bill Price, free climb the West Face of El Capitan giving it a relatively modest grade of 5.11c.
1980	Bill Price puts up the 5.13 test piece, Cosmic Debris at Chapel Wall.
September, 1981	Jim Bridwell returns and establishes yet another aid climbing test piece on El Capitan, Zenyatta Mondatta, with Peter Mayfield and Charlie Row.
1986	John Bachar climbs the Phantom, a 5.13 free climb at Reed's Pinnacle.
1986	John Bachar and Peter Croft climb the Northwest Face of Half Dome and the Nose of El Capitan in a single day.
July, 1986	Dave Schultz with Ken Yager and Jim Campbell climb the route Karma on the South Face of Half Dome during the month of July. The route involves bold, runout face climbing on terrifying terrain that would be difficult to retreat from. <a href="http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/karma">http://www.yosemiteclimbing.org/content/karma</a>
1986	Alan Watts free climbs the Stigma at the Cookie Cliff renaming it the Renegade and rating it 5.13. This ascent causes some resentment and controversy among the Valley locals.
1987	Jim Beyer solos the West Face of El Capitan in a single day.
1987	Dave Schultz and Walt Shipley do the first ascent of another bold face route on the South Face of Half Dome naming it Southern Belle. Schultz returns a year later and frees the route with Scott Cosgrove. Southern Belle features run-out and difficult face climbing.
1987	Peter Croft free solos (no rope) Astroman on Washington Column. Not since Henry Barber's free solo ascent of the Steck-Salathe has a rope-less ascent had such impact on the climbing community.
1988	Todd Skinner and Paul Piana camp on the Salathe Wall of El

	Capitan and through rehearsal, free the climb at a hard 5.13 rating. The two men nearly die near the summit when most of their anchor pulled sending a large block rolling over Paul Piana and breaking his leg. This ascent and Alan Watts free ascent of the Stigma (aka the Renegade) using hang dog techniques and pre-placed gear stirs up jealousy and dissension among the Valley locals.
1989	Paraplegic, Mark Wellman, climbs the Shield on El Capitan with Mike Corbett. They redesign the jumaring (mechanical ascenders) system to accommodate Mark's special needs. The media follows the climb from beginning to end, making it world wide news. Not since Harding climbed has there been such a media frenzy.
1990	Dave Schultz and Peter Croft climb two El Capitan routes, the Nose and the Salathe, in slightly over 20 hours.
1991	Mark Wellman becomes the first paraplegic to climb Half Dome. He climbs Tis-sa-ack with Mike Corbett, taking 13 days. The climb is covered by the media and once again becomes international news.
1992	Peter Croft and Dave Schultz decide to climb the Nose to get back in shape. Both of them have not climbed for well over a month. They reach the top and are pleasantly surprised to have done it in well under five hours.
1993	Peter Croft and Hans Florine climb the Nose in 4 hours and 22 minutes shaving about 20 minutes off of Croft and Schultz's time the year before.
1993	Lynn Hill climbs the Nose with Brooke Sandahl. Lynn free climbs every pitch and bags the highly coveted first free ascent.
1993	Hans Florine and Steve Schneider climb three El Capitan routes in 23 hours. The routes are the Nose, Lurking Fear, and the West Face.
1994	Lynn Hill belayed by Steve Sutton free climbs the Nose again leading the whole route in less than 24 hours.